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Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 7, 2010

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**Patrick-Murray Administration Announces that School Bus Retrofit Program
Installs Pollution Controls on another 347 Buses Serving 49 Communities**

Diesel Retrofits Clean the Air from Vehicles that Serve More Than 34,000 Students

BOSTON – Continuing the Patrick-Murray Administration's efforts to promote environmental stewardship, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) today announced that seven new bus owners have joined the growing list of those who have taken advantage of free diesel retrofit installations under the "MASSCLEANDIESEL: Clean Air for Kids" program. This program encourages the Commonwealth's bus owners to install pollution controls on eligible diesel school buses. There are now 25 participating bus owners who have retrofitted 483 school buses that provide cleaner air benefits to more than 57,000 students.

"Clean air investments like these help create jobs, protect our precious natural resources and the environment," Governor Deval Patrick said.

Participating in this round of MASSCLEANDIESEL school bus retrofits are W.T. Holmes Transportation Co., Inc. of Norfolk, F.M. Kuzmeskus, Inc. of Gill, Vendetti Motors, Inc. of Bellingham, Trombly Motor Coach Service, Inc. of Dracut, Doherty's Garage, Inc. of Lincoln, Tewksbury Transit, Inc. of Tewksbury and Fisher Bus of Somerset.

Collectively, these seven private bus owners have installed pollution controls on 347 diesel school buses that serve 34,500 students across 49 municipalities in the Commonwealth. Firms based in Dedham, New Bedford, Milford, Tyngsboro and Wakefield installed the retrofit devices.

With \$16.5 million in state and federal funding provided by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), under an agreement associated with the Central Artery/Tunnel Project, MASSCLEANDIESEL: Clean Air for Kids aims to install pollution controls – known as diesel retrofits – on thousands of diesel-powered school buses across the Commonwealth. MASSCLEANDIESEL is the nation's first fully funded, statewide program to reduce air pollution from school buses.

"Celebrating this successful project to protect student health and the environment – and the Massachusetts companies that are taking advantage of it – is a terrific way to begin the school year," Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles said.

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“We are committed to building a transportation system that strengthens communities and supports a clean and healthy environment,” MassDOT Secretary & CEO Jeffrey Mullan said.

“Our goal is to provide an excellent and equitable education for all of our students and that starts with helping them arrive at school healthy and prepared to learn,” Education Secretary Paul Reville said. “I am pleased to see the strong participation of schools in these efforts to improve air quality.”

“Each retrofit will reduce pollution from the exhaust and result in cleaner, healthier air for everyone,” MassDEP Commissioner Laurie Burt said. “This is especially important for children whose developing lungs are particularly susceptible to diesel exhaust’s damaging health effects.”

W.T. Holmes Transportation, Inc., of Norfolk, one of the Commonwealth’s largest private bus owners, has installed pollution controls on 103 buses in their fleet. Holmes provides transportation services to approximately 10,000 students each day who attend the Holliston, Medway, North Attleboro and Franklin Public School systems and the King Philip Regional School in Wrentham, Tri County Regional School in Franklin and Norfolk County Agricultural High School in Walpole.

“I was impressed with the MASSCLEANDIESEL Program – everything went smoothly,” Holmes Transportation Manager Tim Holmes said. “Generally, things like this get washed away and not finished. But not with this program – everything went smoothly and as planned.”

F.M. Kuzmeskus, Inc. which also conducts business under the name of Travel Kuz, installed retrofits on 64 buses in its fleet. Travel Kuz is responsible for transporting approximately 2,400 students from nearly 40 municipalities, including students to the Gill Montague Regional School District; from Northfield, Bernardston, Warwick, and Leyden to the Pioneer Valley Regional School District; students to Greenfield public schools; students from 26 area towns to the Franklin County Technical School; and students in Shutesbury, Leverett, Erving, Wendell, New Salem and Petersham to the Erving School Union #28.

“Our company is very grateful that MassDEP worked to make a greener environment so that everyone involved would have cleaner air. It was a proactive move and we are all grateful,” Travel Kuz Owner and President Darlene Kuzmeskus said.

Vendetti Motors, Inc. of Franklin installed retrofits on 61 buses in its fleet. Vendetti Motors transports approximately 2,500 students to the Bellingham Public Schools, 1,500 students to the Milford Public Schools, 1,600 students from Northbridge, Whitinsville and Linwood to the Northbridge Public Schools, and 1,400 students to Uxbridge public schools.

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“The state made it easy to participate,” Vendetti Motors Maintenance Director Jimmy Eames said. “Everything is awesome and all of the pollution rates are down in the older buses. They are running as clean as the newer buses now.”

Trombly Motor Coach Service, Inc. of Dracut installed retrofits on 69 buses in its fleet. Trombly is responsible for transporting 12,500 students to the Andover and Methuen public schools and from Lawrence and North Andover to the Greater Lawrence Technical School.

“The vendor was very responsive to our needs,” Trombly President Michael Trombly said. “They did a good job and we are happy with the outcome. We thank the state for developing this program as we couldn’t afford to do this on our own and the air is much cleaner as a result. Thanks for opportunity to clean up our act!”

Doherty's Garage Inc. of Lincoln installed retrofits on five buses in its fleet and are responsible for transporting approximately 400 students in the Lincoln Public School District.

“I have no complaints at all,” Doherty’s Garage Fleet Manager Dennis Murphy said. “The process was smooth, the installation vendor was prompt and the buses are running cleaner. I have no complaints.”

Tewksbury Transit, Inc. of Tewksbury, which installed retrofits on 21 buses in its fleet, is responsible for transporting 500 students to Tewksbury’s eight public schools.

“Everything is working fine for us,” Tewksbury Transit Shop Manager John French said. “Half of the fleet has these units installed and the other half are newer and came equipped with pollution controls. There is a difference in the yard. We don’t have the crankcase smell coming from under the buses anymore. I would definitely recommend this program to other bus owners.”

Fisher Bus of Somerset, which transports 1,800 students to eight schools in the Somerset Public School system, installed retrofits on 24 buses in its fleet.

“The air quality in our parking lot is so different; we can totally tell the difference,” said Monica Abroziak of Fisher Bus. “We used to have a mega-diesel smell in the mornings when all the buses were started up, but not anymore. It’s so great to have this done. It’s so evident, we are thrilled; it’s a whole world of difference.”

By participating in the program, bus owners received a diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC), crankcase ventilation (CCV) system or both. DOCs, which function like catalytic converters in the engine exhaust system, reduce tailpipe emissions. CCVs, which are installed on the engine, greatly reduce the infiltration of blow-by gases from the engine into a bus’s interior.

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Together, these two add-on components reduce emissions of fine particulate matter (PM – that is 2.5 micrometers in diameter or less) by at least 20 percent or more, hydrocarbons (HC) by 60 percent, and carbon monoxide (CO) by 60 percent. There is strong scientific evidence that PM is implicated in the rising asthma rates in school age children and is also considered a probable carcinogen. HC helps form ground-level smog, and exposure to this pollutant is associated with increased hospital admissions for respiratory distress, such as bronchitis. Exposure to CO can cause headaches, nausea, and death.

New England Transit Sales (NETS), located in Tyngsboro, performed retrofit installations on school buses owned by W.T. Holmes Transportation and Vendetti Motors. Shuster Corporation of New Bedford installed retrofit devices for Doherty's Garage and Tewksbury Transit. Southworth-Milton, Inc. of Milford, doing business as Milton CAT, and NETS shared installation responsibilities for the F. M. Kuzmeskus fleet, and Cummins Northeast of Dedham was responsible for installing retrofit devices for Trombly Motor Coach.

For more information on school bus diesel retrofits, visit:

www.mass.gov/dep/air/masscleandiesel, e-mail program officials at massclean.diesel@state.ma.us, or call the MASSCLEANDIESEL Help Line at 617-292-5809.

MassDEP is responsible for ensuring clean air and water, safe management and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes, timely cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills, and the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources.

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